

This record is a partial extract of the original cable. The full text of the original cable is not available.

071313Z Nov 05

ACTION AF-00

INFO	LOG-00	NP-00	AID-00	A-00	CA-00	CIAE-00	INL-00
	C-00	DODE-00	DOEE-00	PDI-00	DS-00	EAP-00	EUR-00
	UTED-00	VCI-00	H-00	TEDE-00	INR-00	IO-00	LAB-01
	L-00	M-00	AC-00	VCIE-00	NSAE-00	NSCE-00	OIC-00
	OIG-00	OMB-00	NIMA-00	PA-00	PC-01	MCC-00	PER-00
	PM-00	GIWI-00	PRS-00	ACE-00	P-00	SGAC-00	SP-00
	SSO-00	SS-00	TRSE-00	EVR-00	FMP-00	R-00	ECA-00
	IIP-00	SCRS-00	PMB-00	DSCC-00	PRM-00	DRL-00	G-00
	NFAT-00	SAS-00	SWCI-00	/002W			

-----59F9F1 071532Z /38

FM AMEMBASSY NDJAMENA  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2586  
AMEMBASSY ABUJA  
AMEMBASSY ACCRA  
AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA  
AMEMBASSY BAKAKO  
AMEMBASSY DAKAR  
AMEMBASSY LIBREVILLE  
AMEMBASSY LONDON  
AMEMBASSY NIAMEY  
AMEMBASSY PARIS  
AMEMBASSY YAOUNDE

UNCLAS NDJAMENA 001636

SIPDIS

DEPARTMENT FOR AF/C, LONDON AND PARIS FOR AFRICA-  
WATCHERS  
INFO AF/PD (SWESTGATE)

C O R R E C T E D V E R S I O N

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [OIIP](#) [KPAO](#) [KIRF](#) [PHUM](#) [KWMN](#) [CD](#)

SUBJECT: RAMADAN ACTIVITIES 2005

1. (SBU) Summary: To celebrate Ramadan this year, Embassy N'Djamena organized a talk by Dr. Abderrahmane Almahy, rector of King Faisal University, on October 25th. The talk was followed by an Iftar dinner hosted by the Ambassador at his residence. For the final day of Ramadan, PAO traveled north to Mao to attend the Sultan's festival and meet with local NGOs. End Summary

-----  
TALK  
-----

2. (SBU) In celebration of Ramadan, and in an ongoing effort to increase Muslim outreach activities, Embassy N'Djamena invited Dr. Abderrahmane Oumar Almahy, rector of the Saudi-funded King Faisal University - the largest Arabic-language University in Chad, with nearly 3,000 students - to give a talk in the PAS multi-purpose room. Dr. Almahy, a noted Islamic scholar who has published over 20 books and the 2004 recipient of the Chadian National Legion of Honor medal, participated in the State Department's international visitors program for Muslim leaders in 2002. On October 25, 2005, he spoke to an audience of approximately 65 people, including 15 women, about his experiences in the United States during Ramadan 2002. The audience included Chadian government officials, representatives of the High Islamic Council, the Sudanese ambassador and Libyan charg d'affairs, a number of local Imams and Islamic scholars, and members of the Arabic-language media. The Ambassador welcomed the group with a few remarks in Arabic, followed by a short talk on the importance of religious tolerance. Dr. Almahy then presented for over an hour, and answered half a dozen questions. He spoke very highly of the level of religious freedom in the United States, and of his positive impressions of the American Muslim community. General reaction from the audience was extremely positive, and the event received heavy coverage on television, radio, and print media. The Public Affairs Section (PAS) received over a dozen phone calls from attendees in the days following the conference, all of whom offered expressions of gratitude for the invitation to the event.

-----  
PRAYER AND IFTAR  
-----

13. (SBU) Immediately following Dr. Almahy's talk, participants moved to the Information Resource Center to break the fast with water, juice and dates, and to pray on the lawn adjacent to the library. All the participants then moved to the residence, where they were greeted individually by the Ambassador on the back lawn and offered a large Iftar dinner. In addition to the attendees of the talk, Embassy N'Djamena invited Christian leaders from N'Djamena to the dinner, bringing the total number of guests to approximately 100. After the first course of soup and bread, the Ambassador gave a short speech, again on the subject of religious freedom and tolerance, followed by brief remarks by Dr. Almahy, who thanked the Embassy for organizing the event and summarized the content of his talk. Participants then ate a second course of meat, vegetables, and couscous, before departing.

-----  
TRAVEL TO MAO  
-----

14. (SBU) Over the past six years, the PAS has cultivated a close relationship with AJAC (Association de Jeunesse Anti-Clivage), a local NGO in the city of Mao, regional capital of the Kanem province, approximately 220 miles north of N'Djamena. AJAC, whose director was an international visitor in 1998, works against ethnic and gender discrimination, early marriage, and also promotes HIV-AIDS awareness and prevention. This year, PAS N'Djamena helped AJAC with a small grant to fund their outreach activities, including a public event promoting HIV-AIDS awareness that coincided with the end of Ramadan. The PAO, accompanied by PAS Muslim outreach specialist, traveled to Mao to attend this event, at which he was invited to speak. During the two-day trip, the PAO also paid courtesy calls on local officials, including the governor, the prefet, the mayor, and the police chief. He discussed the implementation of the "Shared Futures" project in the region with the governor. The PAO visited with the Sultan of Kanem, the Grand Imam of Mao, and a local Protestant pastor, and was a guest of honor at the annual Ramadan cultural festival held outside the Sultan's palace. He also held meetings with a group of representatives from 20 local women's groups, and 12 local NGOs, discussing possible future USG cooperation in the region. The latter meeting was covered by the regional correspondent of Radio Chad, who sent a dispatch to N'Djamena. Finally, the PAO visited at length with the local Peace Corps volunteer, who was also able to attend the meetings with local NGOs and women's groups, many of whom she works with quite closely.

-----  
COMMENT  
-----

15. (SBU) Both of these events -- the Ramadan talk/Iftar and the PAS trip to Mao -- are examples of the Embassy's continued Muslim outreach programs, reflecting a core MPP goal. By placing moderate Muslim leaders such as Dr. Almahy in the public spotlight, Embassy N'Djamena hopes to promote increased interest in moderate Islam in Chad. By traveling to isolated majority-Muslim towns such as Mao, the PAS hopes to illustrate the Embassy's interest in rural Chad, and promote a positive view of America in the eyes of rural Muslims.

NNNN